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PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE
FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
UNITED NATIONS
Drafting Group
Tenth meeting
14 February 1995

COMMEMORATION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Draft declaration to be adopted at the Special Commemorative Meeting of the General Assembly on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations

1. It will be recalled that the Drafting Group of the Preparatory Committee at its last meeting of 24 January 1995, requested the Bureau to provide a draft of the Declaration which would serve as the "single negotiating document". This draft is submitted in compliance with that request.

Draft submitted by the Bureau

(paragraph numbers are for ease of reference only)

2. Fifty years ago, the Charter of the United Nations was forged with rare wisdom and courage, following the tragedy of the Second World War.

3. The life of the United Nations has often been difficult. It has been put severely to the tests of conflict and great and unpredicted change. Yet it has survived, grown, achieved much for people all over the world. It has, through decolonization, ensured the most fundamental rights of hundreds of millions of human beings. It has shaped the structure of modern international relations.

4. We, the Heads of State, Heads of Government and Heads of Delegation, are gathered at United Nations Headquarters to commemorate the achievement of this half century of the life of the United Nations, acknowledge its unique presence

in history, express our gratitude to all men and women who have made that history possible, and to send the United Nations into the Twenty-First Century, invigorated and with new directions.

5. We solemnly reaffirm the purposes and principles of the United Nations, enshrined in its Charter, and we pledge our full assistance to the United Nations in any action it takes in accordance with its Charter.

6. Today's world is very different from that of fifty years ago. It is vastly more diverse yet vastly more interdependent. In addition, the speed and extent of contemporary change points to a future of even greater challenge and complexity. Our ability to shape that future creatively has been expanded by the end of the cold war.

7. For these, among many reasons, we will need to apply the purposes and principles of the Charter to a redefined Agenda and to reform the United Nations itself, if we are to ensure that the United Nations serves well the needs of the world's people, the people in whose name it was established.

Peace

8. The closing years of the first half century of the United Nations have seen a dramatic expansion in the direct engagement of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security. That engagement has become more complex, including particularly with respect to the provision of humanitarian assistance. This change, which must be expected to remain a feature of the years ahead, requires new approaches to the role and capabilities of the United Nations.

9. To meet this challenge we commit ourselves to:

- the development of a clear, modern understanding of the nature of threats to international peace and security, including non-military threats

- greatly enhancing the capability of the United Nations in the field of preventive diplomacy and a commitment to make preventive diplomacy a priority within our own policies

- enhancing the role of the United Nations in and increasing our national, regional and multilateral efforts in all forms of arms control and disarmament - nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction, conventional weapons, and land mines

- increasing significantly the role played by regional arrangements or agencies for consultation and cooperation on the maintenance of international peace and security, as envisaged in the Charter

- ensuring the achievement of the greatest degree of clarity obtainable on the mandates, scope and duration of direct United Nations actions

- ensuring full compatibility and the required distinction between humanitarian assistance and peace operations

- securing viable financial support to United Nations peace operations

- an increase in the membership of the Security Council and to related changes designed to enhance its efficiency

10. As no consideration of the maintenance of international peace and security would be complete without acknowledging the essential role of economic and social factors in both the origin of conflict and post-conflict peace building, we commit ourselves, elsewhere in this declaration, to a thoroughly reinvigorated United Nations in the field of economic and social development.

Equality

11. We support deeply the Charter's promise of the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small. In this context and with full respect for the historical, cultural and religious backgrounds of States we will:

- promote and encourage adherence to human rights and fundamental freedoms as the birthright of all human beings

- take concerted action towards the full realization of the rights of women, including with respect to their education, literacy and access to work on fair terms

- ensure the rights and protection of indigenous people

Justice

12. The development of international law by the United Nations has played a crucial role in building the structure of modern international relations. This work must be pursued with renewed determination, given the developments under way in technology, transport, information and resource related fields as well as the growing complexity of the work of the United Nations in humanitarian, refugee and peace operations.

13. We commit ourselves to:

- the further progressive development of international law to ensure that the Charter's promises of fundamental rights and social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom can be kept

- the building and maintenance of fair inclusive societies in which justice amongst and between people prevails

- respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law

- engaging the International Court of Justice more actively in the peaceful settlement of disputes, preventive diplomacy - through the provision of advisory opinions - and in the universal application of the provisions of the Charter.

Development

14. The United Nations has played a vital role in the provision of, often life-saving, assistance to women, men and children around the world. But, the Charter's pledge that all members of the United Nations take joint and separate action in cooperation with the Organization for the achievement of higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development has not, in many respects, been fulfilled.

15. The need for action in these fields has never been more urgent. Today one fifth of the world's people live in abject poverty. This and related facts concerning women, children, the environment, communicable diseases, demand our long-term attention and that we enter into unprecedented measures of international cooperation.

16. During the past five years the United Nations has convened six global conferences, the outcomes of which reveal the new agenda we must follow.

17. Determined to implement the outcomes of: the World Summit for Children, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the World Conference on Human Rights, the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women, and on An Agenda for Development, we commit ourselves, in fulfilment of the right to development, to:

- the urgent political agreement on an international Agenda to be implemented throughout the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods Institutions and the World Trade Organization and through our national policies, directed principally towards: the elimination of extreme poverty by a target date, the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the education of and the provision of other basic rights to all women, the stabilization of world population growth, implementation of Agenda 21, the provision of productive employment to women and men wherever possible and the building of inclusive societies

- reshaping the institutions of the United Nations system to enable them to carry out this work, including through eliminating moribund institutions and creating new bodies, as required

- a thorough review of the resource base needed both multilaterally and nationally for this work, including an investigation of new methods for raising resources

- a major investigation of the means through which the private sector can be engaged in this globally significant work

- an effective commitment to global, coordinated action on the major communicable diseases threatening humankind

Our response to the commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations is to redirect it to the service of the human family, especially its suffering members. This is the practical and moral challenge of our time. Our obligation to it is found in the Charter. The need for it is visibly clear in the condition of humankind. We must give to the Twenty-First Century a United Nations which serves both peace and that human family.